export. This entitles domestic suppliers to Drawback/DEPB benefits, CST exemption and Service Tax exemption. 100% Income Tax exemption on export profits available to SEZ units for 5 years. 50% for next 5 years and 50% of ploughed back profits for 5 years thereafter.

8. Second hand capital goods are freely importable.

9. EOU/EHTP units are eligible for Income Tax exemption on export profits, upto 2010, in terms of Sections 10A and 10B of the Income Tax Act.

10. To induce more investment for Research and Development activities, a weighted deduction of 150% on the sums paid to any university, college or an institution or a scientific research association for the purposes of scientific, social or statistical research is available.

Bharat Nirman Scheme

†3160. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the plan of Government for expanding telephone network in rural areas;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is a plan of comprehensive investment for improving communication infrastructure in rural area under 'Bharat Nirman Scheme' and it has to be completed within 2-3 years;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the outline of the future programme;

(d) whether it is also a fact that a large number of consumers have applied for telephones in Buxor (Bihar) and are not being provided with telephone connection since long; and

(e) if so, by when telephone connections could be provided to applicants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The following steps are being taken for expanding and improving the telephone network in rural areas:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(i) Provision of support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for Operation and Maintenance of existing Village Public Telephones (VPTs), installation of VPTs in the remaining villages, provision of additional Rural Community Phones (RCPs) in villages with population exceeding 2000, replacement of Multi Access Radio Relay (MARR) based VPTs and up-gradation of 35,000 VPTs to Public Telecom and Info Centres (PTICs) for providing both voice and data access.

(ii) Provision of telephone on demand with support from Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund in 1,685 commercially unviable SDCAs out of total 2,647 SDCAs in the country by January, 2006. This will cover a significant part of the rural areas of the country.

(iii) Large scale deployment of Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) system including provision of at least one Base Transceiving Station (BTS) in each Short Distance Charging Area (SDCA).

(iv) Opening of new exchanges at places which have a minimum demand of 150 within 5 Kms radius of the proposed exchange site.

(b) and (c) Under 'Bharat Nirman' Scheme Village Public Telephones (VPTs) will be provided in 66,822 unconnected villages progressively by November, 2007 with an outlay of Rs. 451 crore. This excludes villages which are disputed, inaccessible or having population less than 100. These 66,822 villages also include 14,183 villages in remote and far flung areas which are to be provided by Digital Satellite Phone Terminals (DSPTs).

(d) and (e) 248 applicants are in the waiting list for new telephone connections at Buxor as on 31-03-2005. The work of capacity expansion of Buxor exchange by 2,000 lines is under progress and the above waiting list is likely to be cleared by December, 2005.

Pending applications for Excel connections

†3161. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications for Excel connections pending with B.S.N.L. all over the country;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.